

# Slovak national qualifications framework

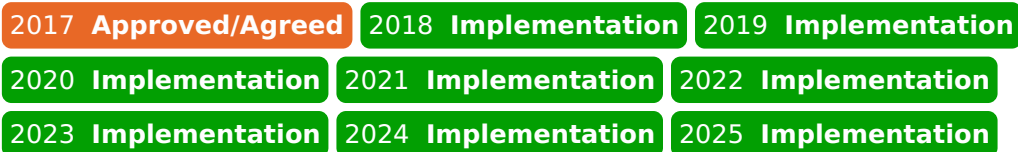
POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE



SLOVAKIA

## Timeline



ID number 28571

## Background

The creation of the Slovak national qualifications framework (SKKR) within the ESF project Creation of the national qualifications system managed by the State Institute of Vocational Education reflected the respective EU policy. State Institute of Vocational Education also acts as the national EQF reference point.

## Objectives

The SKKR is expected to contribute to making the education and training system in Slovakia more flexible, while the qualification standards will be officially recognised. In addition to the three sub-frameworks corresponding to formal education and training, a fourth sub-framework driven by the labour market should be established. The SKKR will only be viable if this sub-framework is sustainably enriched.

## Description

The development of the SKKR has been a lengthy process. It progressed in parallel to the wider reform of VET and involved various stakeholders. Work on the SKKR and the national qualifications register (NQR) has been closely related: the description of qualifications, in terms of standards, forms the content of the register; their levelling is the content of the SKKR. Together with representatives of the sectoral council and other stakeholders, 1 000 qualifications, including standards, had been identified by the end of 2015 within the aforementioned ESF project. The SKKR was referenced to the EQF in October 2017 and the referencing report was approved by the Slovak government in November 2017. The report on the fulfilment of self-certification criteria against the QF of the European higher education area is still pending. An international conference aimed at presenting the SKKR was held on 4 December 2017.

2017 Approved/Agreed

2018 Implementation

### **2019 Implementation**

Indicating SKKR/EQF levels on certificates and diplomas has been introduced since June 2019. An ESF project focused on developing a system of verifying qualifications has been launched.

### **2020 Implementation**

SKKR/EQF levels are also indicated on certificates on qualifications and certificates issued on completion of accredited further education programmes.

Further progress in the development of SKKR is expected from the project System of verifying qualifications. A manual on the creation and using units of learning outcomes will ease the decomposition of existing formal qualifications into units of learning outcomes. These smaller qualifications should enrich the fourth sub-framework of SKKR.

### **2021 Implementation**

On 24 November 2021, the government approved the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30. According to this document and the subsequent action plan for 2022-24, the National Qualifications System (NQS) and the Slovak Qualifications Framework (SKKR) should be revised. Descriptors for SKKR 0 level should be introduced to cover low-skilled groups at risk and the fourth sub-framework of SKKR and the number of qualifications corresponding to this sub-framework should be increased to make qualification routes more flexible. The role of NQS and SKKR should be newly defined, based on the assessment of their current roles and impact on VET. The NQS and Europass portals should be interlinked by the end of 2023. The ESF project System of verifying qualifications is in progress. 330 qualifications have been pre-selected and assessment manuals for identified qualifications will be developed. A manual on the creation of units of learning outcomes has been prepared.

### **2022 Implementation**

The Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24 was approved by the government on 20 April 2022. In line with Action plan Goal 5 'Increase the efficiency and flexibility of the Slovak qualifications system', the evaluation of the effectiveness of the National Qualifications System and the Slovak Qualifications Framework (SKKR) is in progress. The need for the introduction of a robust quality assurance system encompassing all segments of the lifelong learning system has been identified as a core prerequisite for making SKKR fully functional by the expert group working on the study 'New features of skills development systems' and during internal discussion of draft laws: act on lifelong learning and act on adult learning. A detailed quality assurance model is currently in place only in higher education and the related third sub-framework of SKKR. With regard to the first two sub-frameworks (general and vocational school system education), some impulses are in place supported by the State School Inspectorate and the State Institute of Vocational Education peer review activities. A quality assurance model affecting the labour market-driven fourth sub-framework of professional qualifications is missing and should be backed by the act on lifelong learning currently under preparation. The ESF project System of verifying qualifications is aimed at piloting governance and institutionalisation of validation processes on selected qualifications of the National Qualifications System.

Descriptors for SKKR 0 level that should be introduced to cover low-skilled groups and SKKR 5 short-cycle tertiary programmes are still under preparation.

### **2023 Implementation**

In 2023, the State Institute of Vocational Education commissioned an analysis of the Slovak Qualifications Framework (SKKR) titled Slovak qualifications framework and what to do next. The analyses once again advocated support for creating a fully functional framework. The SKKR was initially created under the influence of European

policies, with the internationalisation of education and the removal of obstacles to European mobility being a dominant aspect of its creation. This was achieved by adding the SKKR/EQF level to official certificates. The need to set up learning outcomes-based qualification standards as a basis for delivering labour market-relevant, quality education and training at all levels of formal education and all segments of education remained only a declared goal. The analysis recommended defining specific requirements for including qualifications in the National qualifications register and developing a national quality assurance model as an inevitable precondition for a fully functional framework.

### 2024 Implementation

The new Act on adult education (292/2024) explicitly confirmed the Slovak Qualifications Framework (SKKR) being composed of four sub-frameworks. Three of these correspond to formal education and training (general, vocational and higher education). The fourth sub-framework corresponding to qualifications driven by the labour market needs and not offering a certified level of education should be made functional gradually. The SKKR will only be viable if this sub-framework is sufficiently enriched. The act also specified that the SKKR should be used to recognise acquired knowledge, skills and competences via validation of learning outcomes or units of learning outcomes resulting from earlier formal, non-formal or informal learning.

### 2025 Implementation

The original concept of SKKR was based on three sub-frameworks that were bound to receiving a certificate on an achieved education level within general education, secondary VET, and higher education. The fourth sub-framework should have contained diverse qualifications reflecting labour market needs and based on relevant learning outcomes. The new Act on adult education (292/2024) specified that the fourth sub-framework is composed of the so-called professional qualifications that can be achieved exclusively via adult education/learning, as detailed in § 9 of the law. The registration of a professional qualification is conditioned by an agreement of stakeholders on the so-called qualification card to be placed on the 'Career gate' portal of the Sector Councils Alliance (SCA). This new, more complicated construct of SKKR does not allow for considering modules of initial VET or potential small volumes of learning organised by schools as learning opportunities leading to a professional qualification. The new act even restrictively prescribes that potential microcredentials issued by higher education institutions must belong to the third sub-framework, and similarly, microcredentials issued by VET schools must belong to the second sub-framework. Alternatively, schools must declare that they offer a respective qualification as an adult education programme and subject this programme to the accreditation procedure of the SCA. In such a case, they are treated as any other adult education providers. It is too early to assess whether the new concept of SKKR will prove successful. More time is needed for the creation of qualification cards, and more time is needed for clarifying procedures of validation of non-formal and informal learning (including validation of assessment portfolios of persons seeking to obtain a qualification). Full functionality of the fourth sub-framework and validation procedures is envisaged by the education ministry from 2026.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth
- State Institute of Vocational Education (ŠIOV)
- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (until 2024)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Adult learners  
Low-skilled/qualified persons

### **Entities providing VET**

VET providers (all kinds)

## **Thematic categories**

### **Governance of VET and lifelong learning**

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

### **Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications**

Using EU transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ESCO, ECTS, ECVET principles)

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

## **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

[Website of the national qualifications system](#)

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[National qualifications register \(NQR\)](#)

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[Referencing report of the Slovak qualifications framework towards the European qualifications framework](#)

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[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 \(in Slovak\)](#)

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[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 \(in English\)](#)

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[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24 \(in Slovak\)](#)

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[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24 \(in English\)](#)

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[Act No 292/2024 on adult education](#)

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['Career gate' portal](#)


## **Related policy developments**

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### **2025 Implementation**

#### **Act on adult education (292/2024)**

The education ministry initiated new legislation instead of the originally proposed law on lifelong learning, which was previously recommended by the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 and approved by the government.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**


CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

## Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30

LLCS 2030 focuses on four thematic areas: the qualification system; basic skills and civic education; lifelong learning, counselling, and motivation of citizens for lifelong learning; and building a system of skills management and identification of lifelong learning needs.

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**Type of development**

Strategy/Action  
plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2023 Completed**

## Sector-driven innovations for an efficient labour market

The budget for this 2019-23 ESF project managed by the labour ministry in cooperation with Trexima Ltd. is approximately EUR 20 million. The main activities include:

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**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

## System of verifying qualifications

The project System of verifying qualifications, run by the State Institute of Vocational Education, started in 2019 and is expected to be completed on 1 February 2023.

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**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

## Subsystem

CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## Measures to support the low-qualified and the long-term unemployed

Five-year action plans were launched in 2016 to address unemployment in the most vulnerable districts. Training centres and regional education centres, i.e.

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### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## Flexible routes to labour market relevant qualifications

The so-called 'shortened studies' (ISCED 353) were put in place in 2015/16 in line with the Act on VET (61/2015). They target young people and adults who want to broaden or deepen their qualification or acquire another one to improve their employability.

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### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## National programme for the development of education

On 27 June 2018, the government approved the National programme for the development of education (NPDE). The NPDE was adopted, with 106 measures to be fulfilled until 2027. Some measures related to regional schooling and higher education are relevant also to VET.

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### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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2018 Completed

## Learning Slovakia strategy paper

In September 2017, the education ministry published the Learning Slovakia strategy paper, following a public discussion on a draft version from March 2017.

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### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### “ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Slovak national qualifications framework: Slovakia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28571>